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E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/06/2017

TAGS: [KCFE](#) [NATO](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [SP](#)

SUBJECT: SPAIN ON RUSSIAN CFE CONCERNS AND MINISTERIAL

REF: A. STATE 75239

[B.](#) STATE 77371

Classified By: DCM Hugo Llorens for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[11.](#) (C) Poloff met with Spanish Deputy DG for Nonproliferation and Disarmament Ignacio Sanchez June 6 to discuss the need for a united response to Russia's concerns on the CFE treaty. Sanchez said that neither he nor Deputy DG for International Security Affairs Pablo Gutierrez-Segu would be able to attend the High Level Task Force June 7 in Brussels due to the overwhelming amount of staff work generated by the carousel of high-level visits currently taking place in Madrid. He also said it was unclear what level of participation Spain would have at the Vienna Conference, given the unavailability of its highest level diplomats. He imagined that Pepe Pons, the DG for America and Europe, would attend at least some of the conference, but Sanchez added that DG for Disarmament Angel Lossada would probably not be available. Sanchez said he had received several diplomats the same morning to discuss the CFE conference, including the Russians and the Dutch.

[12.](#) (C) Spain agrees that a unified response to Russia's concerns is absolutely necessary. Nevertheless, Sanchez noted that Russia's stated concerns were likely not indicative of their real agenda, and he hoped that the Alliance would keep an open mind whenever the Russian Federation eventually showed its cards. Sanchez also worried that the timeline is so short that a truly unified position would be difficult to achieve.

[13.](#) (C) Sanchez emphasized that the main goal for all parties should be the ratification of the Adapted CFE treaty. The security framework created in the past 15 years emphasized security built together with Russia, enabling cooperation and engagement in a number of areas that Sanchez said were previously unimaginable. Inflexibility at this time could cause the situation to spiral back to an us-versus-them dynamic. Spain would encourage the Alliance to keep its focus on achieving the long-term goal of ratification of the Adapted CFE treaty.

[14.](#) (C) The big mystery, Sanchez said, is what Russia really wants out of this conference; he imagined that Russia would have to present a more reasonable proposal once the conference got underway as their draft Final Document was not even within the realm of credibility and would hardly justify a conference. He noted that Russia could just as easily have definitively withdrawn from the CFE Treaty without calling a conference; as such, Sanchez does not believe that is their

end goal. If Russia were to make a more moderate proposal, what he called "a new perspective," he hoped the U.S. would receive it with an open mind. He said he hoped the Alliance would not rely solely on the purity of the treaty's wording and legal formulations to justify its position.

¶5. (C) From its perspective as Chair-In-Office of the OSCE, Spain would definitely like to see progress on the Adapted CFE treaty prior to the Madrid conference in November.

(NOTE: DCM will take up this topic again with MFA Political Director Rafael Dezcallar on June 7, and Post will report that conversation septel. END NOTE.)

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